

REMARKS

This Response, submitted in response to the Office Action dated May 1, 2008, is believed to be fully responsive. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Although the claims in this application have remained unchanged since July 5, 2005, this is the *third* election and restriction requirement issued. This practice of continually changing the line is not fair to Applicant. See, e.g., MPEP 706 ("The goal of examination is to clearly articulate any rejection early in the prosecution process so that the applicant has the opportunity to provide evidence of patentability and otherwise reply completely at the earliest opportunity.")

After three (3) years since the first office action issued in this matter, the Examiner now asserts that Applicant's claims are directed to *three* distinct inventions (the Examiner on two prior occasions asserted that Applicant's claims were directed to two distinct inventions). Specifically, the Examiner now asserts that claims 1-10, 12, 15-22, and 27-31 ("Invention I") are directed to an apparatus for securing and concealing a storage unit; claim 11 ("Invention II") is directed to an apparatus; and claims 13-14 and 23-26 ("Invention III") are directed to a method of use.

The Examiner further asserts that the application contains claims directed to patentably distinct species and requires Applicant to elect a species. The Examiner now identifies the following alleged species: Fig. 2; Fig. 3; Fig. 7; and Fig. 8. Although the Examiner has identified the alleged species with reference to figures, the scope of the claims are not limited to the figures.

Applicant provisionally elects to prosecute Invention I, with traverse, and elects the species of Fig. 1, with traverse, on which claims 1-6, 12-16, and 19-31 read.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 2, 2008


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